



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: December 21, 2006
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TWO RESIDENTS OF MEXICO, MISSOURI PLEAD GUILTY TO FEDERAL CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CHARGES

ST. LOUIS, MO - Tony S. Tate and Benny S. Runde, both of Mexico have pled guilty to child pornography charges, United States Attorney Catherine L. Hanaway and Audrain County Prosecuting Attorney Jason Lamb announced today.

"Our office is committed to working with local law enforcement to ensure that these child predators are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law," said Hanaway. "These successful convictions are the result of the investigative efforts of the Missouri Highway Patrol and Prosecuting Attorney Lamb."

"I want to commend US Attorney Hanaway for her commitment to prosecuting these cases," added Lamb. "My office is committed to fighting child exploitation, and will continue to work with other offices to ensure that children are safe from predators who would take advantage of them."

In December 2005, Tony Tate was storing Benny Runde's child pornography images at his home on Western Avenue in Mexico, Missouri. Runde retrieved the material from Tate in an effort to hide it from law enforcement. After retrieving the material from Tate, Runde was stopped by a local law enforcement officer who found the child pornography in his vehicle. The child pornography depicted a minor female engaged in sexually explicit activity.

Tate, 43, 600 block of North Western Avenue; and Runde, 44, 24000 Audrain County Road 832, both of Mexico, Missouri each pled guilty to one felony count of possession of child pornography. Tate pled today, Runde pled last week. Both men appeared in federal court in St. Louis before United States District Judge Rodney W. Sippel.

Both men now face a maximum penalty of ten years in prison and/or fines up to \$250,000. Sentencing has been set for March 9, 2007.

This case is being brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue

victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit
www.projectsafechildhood.gov

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